NATURE SPACE™
Ecological Restoration in Aotearoa

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Newsletter

KAKA NEST FOUND IN PRINCE OF WALES PARK

Further proof that native birdlife in Wellington City is increasing has been confirmed by the discovery of a kaka nest with chicks in the southern Town Belt, on the edge of Prince of Wales Park in Mount Cook.

If the chicks survive, these will be the first kaka known to have bred successfully outside of Zealandia, where birds were released into the wild in 2002. Kaka were previously considered to have been extinct in Wellington since early last century.

Wellington City Council's Manager of Community Engagement and Reserves, Myfanwy Emeny, says that, coincidentally, the nest is close to a little stream where there is a population of banded kokopu – a species of native fish.

"So we have two special native species living and breeding in the heart of our city, it's a wonderful example of how people and nature can coexist."

Matu Booth, who runs a local community restoration programme and discovered the kaka nest, says the birds are part of a loose flock of kaka that has taken up residence the southern Town Belt.

"I'd been seeing the two kaka around the area where I live for at least a year. We know they're from Zealandia because they are banded and the database of recorded birds shows they hadn't been seen there since they were juveniles."

The male kaka is three years old and the female bird is two, and in her first breeding season.

"In early October, I saw the pregnant female in my garden and then only saw her partner for several weeks. In late November I saw the two birds together, so I started searching for a nest in this part of the Town Belt where there are big old trees," says Matu.

He found the nest when he came across the male kaka feeding the female, and then watched her fly up and squeeze into the nest opening to feed her chicks. The chicks are now about two months old, and if they survive, will be the first kaka

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Kaka Nest Found in Prince of Wales Park

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known to have bred successfully outside of Zealandia. As they're still learning how to fly, the chicks often end up on the ground where they are at risk from dogs or cats.

Myfanwy Emeny says this part of the Town Belt is being restored as part of the Town Belt Management Plan, which includes a replanting programme.

"We're working with community groups to replant the area in native trees which will eventually provide nesting places for kaka when the forest matures.

"Kaka like to nest in natural cavities in old trees, with foliage cover to protect them as they approach and leave the nest. There's no original native forest with such cavities left in Wellington, so the kaka are nesting in other big trees. We may also consider installing some nest boxes to help them."

Mischa McCauley and the Kiwi chick was having a health check as part of the Moehau kiwi project. Photo: Steve Carson

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

LIZARD STRATEGY FOR WELLINGTON

By Richard Romijn, Greater Wellington Regional Council
(Email: *Richard.romjin@gw.govt.nz*)

The Wellington Regional Lizard Network (WRLN) has just released its *Lizard strategy for the Wellington region 2012-20*. This regional lizard strategy outlines a coordinated approach to ensure the conservation and restoration of lizard communities in the Wellington region. WRLN is a group of conservation managers and lizard specialists from a variety of groups and organisations who aim to identify priorities for and lead lizard conservation throughout the Wellington region. The group promotes lizard conservation and provides advice and training to those involved in lizard conservation. The group is primarily an advisory group but will actively identify work that needs to be done, promote this work, and train and facilitate the implementation of it.

The Lizard strategy for the Wellington region 2012-20 can be found at the document page of the Wellington Regional Lizard Network on Nature Space.

WEBSITE UPDATE: NEW FEATURES

New website manual

A new version of the website manual is now available. New additions to the manual include explanation of the News pages which can be created to tell people about news happening at your group, step by step instructions on how to create and edit pages, how to delete pages and how to change your password and admission email address. We hope these additions will be useful in maintaining your pages.

Posters for groups

The Nature Space team has created Nature Space branded posters that your group can use to advertise your group, your group's planting days and your group's other actives. These posters can be accessed by going to the resource centre then clicking "Nature Space Resources" and then click on the link to promotional materials.

Above: Shakespear Regional Park

SUCCESS STORY

SHAKESPEAR OPEN SANCTUARY
A RESTORATION PROJECT IN THE HEART OF SUBURBIA

By Mark Seabrook-Davison, Auckland Council
(Email: *mark.seabrook-davison@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz*)

The establishment of Shakespear Open Sanctuary has achieved the goal of creating a wildlife reserve within the urban boundary of Auckland city. The old conservative attitude of shutting-away threatened species in reserves closed to the public has been replaced with an enlightened attitude to involve the public in their restoration.

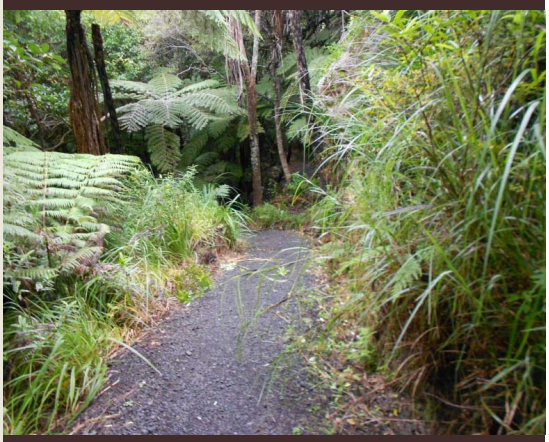
Shakespear Park has been a popular place for Aucklanders to enjoy recreational activities such as swimming, walking, picnicking and fishing. In 2011, a 1.7 kilometre pest proof fence was completed which enclosed 500 hectares of the Whangaparaoa peninsula, creating the Shakespear Open Sanctuary. A comprehensive exotic pest eradication programme was instigated which successfully removed all unwanted animal pests.

The restoration of the biodiversity of Shakespear Park is a joint project between the Shakespear Open Sanctuary Society Incorporated (SOSSI), Auckland Council and the New Zealand Defence Force. The majority of the remaining indigenous vegetation is on the old Defence Armaments Depot (DAD) land which is incorporated into the open sanctuary.

Shakespear Park incorporates many heritage assets of the Auckland area. The military heritage features of the DAD land has some of the most intact armament installations remaining in New Zealand. The Shakespear homestead represents built heritage of one of the founding farming families of Auckland. The entire Shakespear peninsula is steeped in Maori cultural heritage values; especially Okoromai Bay and Te Haruhi Bay from whence much of the early Maori trading occurred. The mana whenua of Shakespear are Ngati Whatua with tribal links to Te Kawerau, Ngati Rongo, Ngati Poataniwha, Ngati Tai and Ngati Kahu.

In its second year of operation, no species have as yet been transloacted into the open sanctuary. However, bellbird, red-crowned parakeet and brown teal have naturally colonised. It is expected that other threatened species will self-introduce from the adjacent wildlife reserves of Tawharanui, Tiritiri Matangi, Motuihe and Rangitoto.

As the biodiversity re-establishes, it is expected that residents on the Whangaparaoa may again experience the dawn chorus provided by our unique birds.



Waterfall Gully

Te Haruhi Bay

Native pigeon Kereru
All photos: Mark Seabrook-Davison

NATIONAL CONFERENCE:
CONSERVATION INCORPORATED – WHAT'S AHEAD FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION IN NEW ZEALAND?

Dunedin, 17-18 October 2013

The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year by hosting a national conference for citizen-based conservation organisations like ours. The conference is entitled Conservation Incorporated. Its aim is to strengthen and diversify the community base for biodiversity conservation in New Zealand. We will convene Conservation Incorporated in Dunedin on 17-18 October 2013. The conference will be preceded on 16 October by applied workshops on fundraising, leadership and predator management. Conservation Incorporated will be a strongly applied conference, from which participants will leave better prepared for the future and more aware of their place in the broader conservation landscape. We are calling for papers right now. See our website for details about conference themes, workshops, events and how to tell us what you'd like to present:

http://yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz/wordpress/conservationinc/

We would value your insights. See you in Dunedin.

COMMON ISSUES ANSWERED

"My photo is too large"

When you add a large image to a text box it will not be resized automatically.

This can be fixed by putting the image in an 'images' area if the page you are working on has one. Or you can use Photoshop or one of the free programmes suggested on page 33 of the user manual to resize images. The resized image should be no greater 650 pixels × 600 pixels. If you still have an issue let us know and we will try to help – email: *info@naturespace.org.nz*

Restoration project at west end of Silverstream Reserve, Waimakariri District, Canterbury. Photo: David Birch

NATURE SPACE STATISTICS

Number of groups per region

Region	Groups
Auckland	34
Bay of Plenty	2
Canterbury	6
Chatham Islands	0
Gisborne	0
Hawke's Bay	9
Manawatu-Wanganui	4
Marlborough	1
Nationwide	3
Nelson	0
Northland	5
Otago	2
Southland	3
Taranaki	3
Tasman	3
Waikato	6
Wellington	62
West Coast	2
Total	**144**

Number of visitors per region for the last quarter (Nov-Jan):

Region	Visits
Auckland	998
Wellington	943
Canterbury	176
Waikato	110
Hawke's Bay	65
Manawatu-Wanganui	50
Bay of Plenty	27
Southland	26
Otago	24
Northland	21
Nelson	13
Marlborough	7
Taranaki	7
Total	**2,467**

Plants planted: **981,411**
Possums killed: **7,668**
Stoats killed: **2,404**

COMMUNITY GROUP SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS HOW NATURE SPACE USERS DIFFER FROM THE REST

By Malcolm Harrison, Auckland Council Biosecurity Team (Email: *malcolm.harrison@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz*)

A survey was undertaken in mid 2012 of all community groups that Auckland Council's Biosecurity team works with. 41 groups (60%) returned the survey and the results showed that groups were roughly split between pest animal and plant control as their core activity. Where pest plant control was undertaken, groups were actively planting native species as replacement plants.

The main requests for training related to pest plant identification, pest animal control, and native plant identification which reflects these group activities. The main challenges facing these groups were securing long term funding and recruiting more volunteers to their projects.

29% of the groups surveyed use Nature Space. When we look at the responses of these groups and compare them to those that do not use Nature Space there are some marked differences.

The Naturespace groups tend not to focus on species specific pest animal or plant control, rather focusing on the whole suite of pest species. They also have higher neighbourhood cohesiveness as their project aim than other groups. They do however show the same scores for size of project area and numbers of active group membership.

Photo points are used significantly higher as a monitoring technique among Nature Space groups (73% vs. 29%). All of these groups have a group website other than Nature Space compared to only 65% of the other groups. This latter point may explain the greater use of photo points as they have a means to store and share them. This does not however mean that their communication with other groups is mostly electronic; in fact Nature Space groups meet face to face with other groups 34% more often.

A higher proportion of Nature Space groups have contact with Auckland Council's Local Parks section than the remainder of the groups (55% vs. 38%), and all have more than one section of Council as a point of contact compared to only 70% of other groups.

A reliance on various funding grants (100% vs. 78%) as the main source of revenue to undertake their work sets Nature Space groups apart from the remainder of the groups.

Nature Space groups have a higher proportion attendance at Auckland Council run workshops (55% vs. 38%).

In summary groups that use Nature Space appear to be more connected to their fellow groups meeting them more often, and are more likely to attend Council's training workshops. They are also almost certainly taking advantage of council funding schemes and have a higher proportion of contacts within Council.

PHOTOS

If you have a photo that you think highlights ecological restoration in action please send it to *info@naturespace.org.nz* and it may be selected for featuring in the next newsletter.

Young plants set outdoors to harden off. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS REACH ONE MILLION MILESTONE

Conservation volunteers across New Zealand have reached new heights by planting more than 1 million plants throughout the country.

Volunteers reporting their results on the Nature Space website have planted more than one million plants, along with eradicating over nine thousand possums and stoats.

"It's an excellent milestone for Nature Space volunteers to chalk up over 1 million plants been planted," says DOC's Nature Space Coordinator Tim Bailey.

"Nature Space was set up to the give conservation volunteer groups and individuals a place to promote their efforts and connect with other interested parties," says Tim.

"Many groups manage their own pages adding data, photos, events and news making it a perfect place to keep up with volunteer conservation in their local area and find out what is happening nationwide."

Nature Space is an independent website supported by the Department of Conservation, World Wildlife Fund, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, and local government agencies of the North Island. It is free to join Nature Space and to add your own data to the online database. To find out more about the website and about the many community groups working in your region, visit *www.naturespace.org.nz* or email us: *info@naturespace.org.nz*

BACKDUNE ENVIRONMENTS THE FOCUS OF A THREE YEAR RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

To date, dune restoration work in New Zealand has focused primarily on restoration of native sandbinders on the most seaward dune face – which are critical to maintaining natural dune form and function. However, many community groups are now moving into the restoration of indigenous biodiversity in backdune areas and facing considerable challenges. These areas are very complex due to greater species and community diversity, a range of sub-environments, and serious problems with invasive exotic vegetation, grazing animal pests, and human pressures. Whilst the key to planting coastal sand dunes is matching species to appropriate zones, identifying these zones can be very challenging. The limited information we have tells us that proximity to the coast and shelter are key factors in influencing survival and growth rates.

The Dune Restoration Trust of New Zealand (Dunes Trust) is into Year Two of a three-year Ministry for the Environment's Community Environment Fund project that sets out to enhance the capacity of local communities, councils and the Department of Conservation to undertake restoration of indigenous biodiversity in coastal backdune environments.

The project involves extensive review of existing knowledge, setting up demonstration areas and monitoring sites, undertaking field-based workshops, and providing practical guidelines for backdune restoration. We are working in eight regions from Northland to Southland at over 50 coastal sites. This nationwide coverage will ensure we deal with a wide range of dune environments and climatic settings.

The **variation between backdune environments** in New Zealand is immense. As the Dunes Trust CEF Team are finding out, each site has its own unique qualities and challenges. Here at Petone Beach, Wellington, where the natural dune system is constricted by development, roadside plantings of backdune species are providing seed sources for semi stable dunes within metres of the seaward side of the sea wall. Photo: M. Bergin

Weeds are the **number one issue** at many back dune sites. The cost and effort of control and removal seems endless. So, true to kiwi nature - locals are coming up with innovative and site specific ways to deal with weeds that reduces cost and effort. At Proctors Beach in Northland, on-site compost bins have been built. It may not work everywhere, or for every weed – but it suits this site. Photo: M Bergin

Demonstration sites have been set up throughout the country. In the western Waikato region sites include the Marokopa, Aotea and Ruapuke beaches and represent different coastal settings and degrees of exposure. Unlike most beaches along the east coast of the upper North Island, west coast beaches are highly dynamic where persistent and often strong onshore westerly winds and large volumes of sand have a significant effect on the dune morphology and coastal ecology. Photo: S. Stephens

The need for **several levels of monitoring** has been identified by Coastcare groups and management agency staff. These include: a method of determining baseline dune profile data and using belt transects; guidelines for comparing management techniques; monitoring the establishment of rare local native species; monitoring the impact and effectiveness of restoration activities on natural regeneration. Photo: Greater Wellington

Maintenance of plantings is a key factor in success. A wide range of backdune native species have been established at Caroline Bay by the Timaru District Council over the past three years. An excellent maintenance programme, particularly for weed control, has seen very high survival rates and growth of native species. Restored backdunes areas are now being used by penguins. Photo: M. Bergin

For more information see *www.dunestrust.org.nz*

COMMON ISSUES ANSWERED

"I have created a photo gallery/photopoint page but cannot edit it"

If you have created a gallery/photopoint page but cannot access it this could be because you have saved the page with just the title or put the pictures in the 'Body' field rather than uploading them through the 'Images' field. Use the following method to access the page so you can edit the page to fix the problem.

Go to your groups 'Group galleries' or 'Photopoints' page. Then replace the number at the end of web address with the gallery name in lower case with spaces replaced with '-', then press enter, e.g.
www.naturespace.org.nz/galleries/398 to *www.naturespace.org.nz/galleries/tree-planting*

This should take you to the gallery/photopoint edit page. Then add a picture to the 'image' field by clicking on the browse button, select the picture you want to add from your computer, click 'open' and then click upload. The first picture in the 'images' area will be created in to a link to access that gallery/photopoint by website.

Then more images can be added to the 'images' by clicking on 'Add another item' and browsing and uploading another photo. If you still have problems please let us know the group, date and time you made the page and we should be able to find it and fix it.

If you are having any other issues or have any questions or comments about the website or restoration in general please do not hesitate to email us on *info@naturespace.org.nz* and we will try to help.

KEEPING YOUR PAGE UP-TO-DATE

It is import to keep your group information up to date, so people are able to contact you about your project. If you are unsure how to do anything or are having issues doing something on Nature Space let us know and we will do our best to help you out. Also if your group contact details change please let the Nature Space team know at *info@naturespace.org.nz* so we can stay in touch with you.

This issue of the Nature Space newsletter is sponsored by **Auckland Council**

Working bee morning tea break – lower Kaiwharawhara valley, 2012. Photo: Peter Reimann

Register for Nature Space to receive this national newsletter: *www.naturespace.org.nz*